



GEOFFREY KONSTAM

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1899–1962

Geoffrey Lawrence Samuel Konstam, a member of the British Cardiac Society since 1947, died at his home in Hampstead on February 27, 1962.

He was born on November 23, 1899 and was educated at Westminster School. Immediately on leaving, he obtained a commission in the R.E. Signals in the First World War and after demobilization started his medical career at King's College and later King's College Hospital, where he qualified in 1923. Of spare build and active temperament, he excelled at tennis and was captain of the team at the medical school. He obtained his M.D. in 1928 and M.R.C.P. in 1927, being elected F.R.C.P. in 1939. Appointments as Physician to the West London and the London Jewish Hospitals followed but hardly had he begun his work there when the Second World War broke out. Enlisting at once, Konstam served as a Lieutenant-Colonel in the R.A.M.C. and was in charge of the medical divisions of the 43rd and 63rd General Hospitals in the Middle East. Returning to civilian practice, he was appointed examiner in medicine at Cairo University in 1945 and, later, he examined on the Conjoint Board from 1951 to 1955.

Konstam's interest in cardiology quickly declared itself, and he organized the cardiographic department at the West London Hospital soon after his election to the staff, and at the London Jewish Hospital. His writings on cardiological subjects included papers on pulmonary arteritis, on the cardiovascular effects of vitamin B deficiency, and on congenital heart disease. During the last war he became interested in endomyocardial fibrosis in Africans, and described the condition (with Evan Bedford) in 1946 (*Brit. Heart J.*, 1946, 8, 236).

After the Second World War, Geoffrey became interested in sculpture and took this up as an absorbing hobby in which he quickly attained a high degree of skill and received the acclaim of professional artists. Alfred Wolmark, a friend and patient of his, said of him that he would have achieved equal distinction and success as a sculptor had he chosen that profession instead of medicine. His house at Hampstead, with its collection of paintings by Wolmark, statuary by Epstein, his work, and that of his son, was a veritable art treasury.

Geoffrey was a lovable and kindly man with an old-world courtliness and charm. He was infinitely gracious and patient. His patience was sometimes the despair of those who worked with him, since it did not allow him ever to be punctual or to keep to any sort of time-table; but this was because his time and his attentive interest were invariably available to anyone who sought them. To his patients he was truly the beloved physician. He bore his long-drawn-out illness with a stoicism and a philosophy that were astounding, until one realized that he treated death as he treated everyone—as an equal, to be given its full meed of courtesy and grace.

He leaves a widow (who had been a fellow student) and two sons and a daughter.

DAVID WEITZMAN